1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

elders having great weight, and, as I shall subsequently point out, even the women are not excluded from a share in the politics of the tribe.

Though more or less dominated by the numerous conquerors who have successively, for three thousand years, overrun those regions which are now called Kūrdistan, the Kūrds have never ceased to own a distinct nationality. Since the Ottoman conquest they have been constantly wavering between the two rival powers of Islam—the Sunnis and the Shias, as represented by the Turks and the Persians respectively, siding, according to the exigencies of the time, now with one party and now with the other. Notwithstanding their sufferings in the destructive wars of conquest waged for centuries by Turk and Persian, and the constant internal feuds fomented by both those nations in order to weaken the power of the Kūrdish warriors, they still maintain a sort of semi-independence, preserving their nationality as distinct from that of their neighbours as in earlier days, though possessing no dynasty, political constitution, ancient religion, historical traditions, or literature, to bind them together.

Three times during the present century have national aspirations incited them to throw off the Turkish yoke; but owing to the immense extent of mountainous country over which they are scattered, their successes have been but partial and nugatory. Representatives as they probably are of the ancient Chaldeans, no other race has, perhaps, so long preserved its nationality under conditions so unfavourable.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

538 altering it in any way. The incidents it describes are
114 totally unlike those of Kūrdish stories generally, and are probably derived from real occurrences, but belonging to a date far anterior to that assigned by the story-
● [174] teller, who, with the supreme disregard for accuracy manifested by persons of his calling in the East, would refer any remarkable story to the immediate ancestors of the favourite Kūrdish hero, Sulieman Baba, if he could not refer them to the hero himself without being convicted of a too glaring anachronism. It may possibly be a survival of some story of chivalry belonging to the crusading age of Saladin, whom the Kūrds declare to have been a prince of their race.

A parallel to this legend may also be found in the
[171] Greek folk-tale of Ἡ βασίλοπούλα ποὺ πάγαι στὸν πόλεμο, "The Princess who went to the War."[1]

The Maiden Champion.

539 There lived once in Darishmana two brothers, Fakih Ahmed and Khidder, who had suffered much from the hostility of the Bulbassis, the most powerful people of Pizhder. Fakih Ahmed, who was of a bold and proud spirit, quitted his village in disgust, swearing never to return to it unless he should be in a position to avenge himself. He went to Constantinople, and entered the service of the Sultan.

It so happened that the Sultan was at that time at war with the English (or Franks). In those days battles were generally decided by single combat. A champion had come forth from the Frankish host

[1] Von Hahn, Νεοελληνικὰ Παραμύθια, p. 57; and Miscolas, i. p. 114.

Georgians and Muslim Circassians. In addition to being 101
inhabited by these noted for their tenacity, this country has been the meeting place of empires and cultural traditions, in the latest centuries those of the Arabs, Persians, and Turks. The Kurds, because of their numerical strength, emphasis on arms, and religion, fared far better in the upheavals of the first World War than some of their Christian neighbors.

By "Kurd" one has reference to an ethic unit or nation whose most distinctive characteristics are its language and costume. Coupled with these are a large number of minor peculiarities which differentiate it from other Islamic peoples. Kurdish culture as a whole, however, is an amalgam 105
in which the more recent influences of the Arab, Persian, and Turk are easily discernable and many things, such as orthodox religious practices, may be assigned definite historical origins. Despite the abundance of foreign elements, Kurdish life has its own distinctive form. 114
History of the Kurds has not been satisfactorily explored, and those few treatments which have appeared are, for the most part, disappointing, for they have been written by persons whose aims were far from academic or whose scholarship is doubtful. Without entering the controversies which 175
surround the antiquity of the nation, the Kurds seem to appear first in classical literature as the Karduchi of Xenophon and the Cordyaei of Strabo, a mountain people occupying much the same area as they do today.[1] Their 174 197

[1]Driver, 1922, pp. 491-493.

language is Indo-European, closely related to Persian, and they were probably a part of that same movement which brought others of the Indo-European linguistic group, such as the Armenians, Hittites, and Persians, into the Middle East. Racially it is difficult to give an opinion, because little work of a modern nature has been undertaken among them. In the older parlance of physical anthropology, however, they exhibit traits considered much more characteristic of the races of Europe and Central Asia than of the Arabs to the south, such as blond hair, blue eyes, fair pigmentation, and round heads. They give immediate evidence, by these older criteria, of being a mixture. In religion they are Sunnite Muslims and are thus set off from the Shiite Iranians to the east. Whether this is the result of their original conversion or the continued influence of the Sunnite Turks and Turkomans is unknown.

Ethnologically almost no systematic investigations have been made among the Kurds, although a few brief, but accurate, generalized descriptions are to be found.[1] These last, however, have been written by persons, administrators, missionaries, travelers, and the like, who are not ethnologists. This, in itself, need not constitute a deterrent, but their primary purpose in publication was not the portrayal of a culture. It is unnecessary to review here the large number of other types of references to the Kurds, extending from ancient times to the present, except to remark that their most distinctive characteristic is their prejudice

[1] For example, May, 1921.

and herds. The Kurdish shepherds and herdsmen of northern Iraq cannot be said to belong to this group. Although the matter requires more exact study, they live in symbiotic relationship with certain larger groups of sedentary farmers with whom they have definite economic and social ties, these last usually tribal or, at least, a common overlordship. It seems very much as though a real division of labour were involved, certain of the group being devoted to move the flocks of the whole with the change of seasons, but the historical background of this interdependence is more complex. It is, for example, uncertain whether or not the Kurdish people as a whole were once nomadic in some restricted sense, one author holding that the word "Kurd" itself was in Medieval days but a generic term for such wanderers.[1] However the development may have taken place, there is abundant evidence that the kotshir, with their mobility and firepower (the nomad of the Middle East emphasizes weapons to a much greater extent then the agriculturist), exercised until quite recently extensive dominance over the settled folk while quite inferior to them in numbers. The Kurdish chieftains, the old powers of the land, are in many cases associated with kotshir groups, perhaps belonging directly among them, although as landowners they need not follow the migrations. It should further be remembered that a small number of herdsmen can account for

[1] Nazaheri, 1951, p. 254.

the summer heat, these rooms have a height which seems ab- 342
normal to European or American eyes, about ten or twelve
feet, and the rooms of the first storey are additionally
raised on a platform of earth one or two feet above the
level of the courtyard. The windows facing inward and those
of the second storey are larger, and may boast glass in
wooden frames brought from Erbil. The ceilings consist
of bundles of poles and twigs, and are mostly left un-
finished, although a few have been plastered and pasted
with newspaper. The floors and the roof are of mud mixed
with chaff laid down in a number of layers. [356]
Before cleaning a room, it is customary to wet the floor down by
copious sprinkling, and sweeping usually carries off a
little of the floor. The roofs are equipped with long, [413]
smooth, cylindrical stones, four to six inches in diameter
and about a foot in length, used to roll the mud of the
roof after rain or snow. With a few exceptions, most of
these homes are of two storeys, and, although there is
considerable variation in the assignment of rooms, of
which six or seven constitute a minimum number, and in
the plan itself, the adherence to a courtyard design is
marked. In addition, there is an obvious attempt to orient
the house and its windows so that household life, specifi-
cally that of the women, is hidden from passers-by on the
street and people of neighboring buildings. Lacking a [351]
"true" courtyard shielded on all sides, the deficiencies
are amended with high, impenetrable fences of interlaced
twigs and foliage. In the absence of archaeological [194]

information, it would be difficult to assign such a house plan to any definite cultural horizon, but the architectural attempt to conceal the women is clearly Islamic, and, while it had its initial expansion under the Arabic caliphates, probably had its greatest influence in Kurdistan under the Turks when such things were carried to an extreme, at the same time reinforced by the prestige of a ruling class, in most parts of the Ottoman Empire.

The entrance of the house requires special attention, for certain important customs surround it. The doors are of heavy timbers, swinging on iron hinges, and, lacking a metal lock, are bolted at night with a heavy wooden bar which is kept in place by a second piece above it on a pivot. The outer doorway may have a fuel lamp for night and in many cases is furnished with charms designed to ward off the evil eye, a belief which will be discussed in a later section. These are characteristically a blue porcelain plate, embedded in the mud wall-surfacing, or a pair of old shoes hung on a nail. The popular reasoning behind the second device is that it indicates to a person with the eye that "your malevolent glance is as powerful as our pair of old shoes," an explanation that probably has little to do with the origin of the custom. Whenever the construction of a house is completed, the new owner sacrifices an animal, a sheep or a goat, by cutting its throat before the door and smears some of the blood on the doorposts and the threshhold. Often he dips his hand in the blood, and applies it to the door, making by

2: Masters E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

taggar who, among other things, performed such feats as eating pebbles for alms in the <u>shaykhanas</u>, as well as in one of the best-educated men of the community. 792 735

Turning to the Rowanduz district, it is possible to illustrate and to amplify these general remarks. First, there is a landed, hereditary aristocracy of Kurds. As far as one can gather from the meager histories of the area, the Kurds had been ruled by independent or semi-independent chieftains for an unknown period until Ottoman and Iranian power was able to extend its rule over them. This control, usually superficial, was never solidified until after the first World War. As rulers, the Kurdish chieftains led their people in war, arbitrated their quarrels, and, to some extent, directed their economy. In return for these things, they laid claim to a certain share of annual produce, animals or harvest. In some cases the chieftainship appears to have had certain democratic aspects, the new ruler, characteristically, but not necessarily, the eldest son of the deceased, selected from a noble household by an assembly of the tribesmen. In others it was purely aristocratic. As has been seen above, chieftains are many times associated with tribes, that is to say, there is no tribe without such a leader, but otherwise they are feudal overlords. Often a chieftain can be both the head of a tribal group and the "owner" of non-tribal lands and villages. The tenure of property illustrates this. Sometimes the land and flocks are owned by the 565 1790 622 619 [648] 565 622 619 423

The heart of the matter is to be found in the distinction between a society governed by the state and one ruled by tribal or feudal chieftains. The state is no stranger to the area of the Middle East, for it was in this province that it probably made its first appearance and some of the more complex bureaucracies of history were evolved. Nevertheless, there are certain places, Kurdistan among them, where it is a newcomer, and others, such as Saudi Arabia, where it has yet to appear. Ottoman control in Kurdistan was rarely strong, and was characterized by a sort of daily contest between the scattered authorities, supported by their troops and gendarmes, and the local inhabitants in matters of tax-collection and recruitment for the army. Beyond the borders of Turkey and other well-organized districts, the Ottoman Empire was largely oriented for tribute, the enrichment of its officers and the Sublime Porte, and the Turks, aside from their inroads and the prestige attached to conquerors, did little to tamper with the economy and the social structure of their subjects. Rowanduz, before the first World War, was led by its aristocrats and its merchants, and the meager representation of Ottoman rule was regarded as an everyday annoyance which could be circumvented, bribed, or ambushed as the occasion demanded. Insofar as the Turks were satisfied with what little money and recruits they were able to collect, they were not considered greatly detrimental to life.

The rise of the modern state in Iraq provides in places such as Rowanduz, good examples of the impingement

5. [illegible]	-	Father's Brother
6. [illegible]	-	Mother's Brother
7. [illegible]	("Aunt")	Parent's Sister
8. [illegible]	("Brother")	Brother
9. [illegible]	("Sister")	Sister
10. [illegible]	("Boy")	Son
11. [illegible]	("Girl")	Daughter
12. [illegible]	("Grandchild")	Grandchild

601

Two of these have been borrowed from Arabic, [illegible] and khal, cognate with 'amm, "paternal uncle," and khal, "maternal uncle," respectively. On the other hand, the Arabic words for the paternal and maternal aunts, 'amma and khala, have not entered the Kurdish system. The reasons for the adoption of these two terms are difficult to discern. The two uncles are differentiated with respect to residence and their relationships with the individual to a much greater degree than the aunts. One might suspect that for these reasons, or the use of Arabic in religious and legal documents, such as wills, over the centuries, the displacement of the original Kurdish names took place. This, however, cannot immediately explain why a similar adoption of Arabic for such words as "father" or "brother" did not also occur. The mechanics of diffusion, then, must await further study. [174]

The second group of terms, six in number, indicate affinal relations, those created by marriage:

1. [illegible]	-	Father-in-law
2. [illegible]	-	Mother-in-law
3. [illegible]	("Man")	Husband
4. [illegible]	("Woman")	Wife
5. [illegible]	("Bridegroom")	Son-in-law
6. [illegible]	("Bride")	Daughter-in-law

As noticed above, a man may address his wife's relatives by

CHAPTER VII

RELIGIOUS LIFE

In the preceding pages a number of instances have 771
been encountered in which religious belief and practice enter into the routine of the town, and it now remains to add to them those which, albeit inextricably bound up in everyday life, can be treated of themselves. Primarily, the "official" faith of the townspeople will be spoken of, in the sense that it has been defined by Islamic priests themselves, to which may be subtended a secondary body of credences and observances, not necessarily "religious" in the usual sense of the term, conveniently dealt with in this connection. The faith of the townsman is undifferentiated from that of the aristocrat, but is not necessarily identical with that of the government official or officer, several of whom, as has been seen, are Shiite Arabs from southern Iraq or Christians.

It is necessary to place the people of Rowandus, 779
as well as the Kurds of northern Iraq, in some perspective with the rest of the believing world. First, their faith is that of Islam ("submission" to God or Allah) preached by the Arab prophet Muhammad (d. 632) and carried by his heirs into the Kurdish mountains as it was elsewhere in the world. This is a religion which, according to a generality [174]

of modern scholarly opinion, constitutes a syncretism of ancient Arabic, Judaic, and Christian beliefs, together with whatever elements of originality the Prophet himself had added. The sacred book of the Muslim ("one who submits"), the adherent of Islam, is the Quran ("recitation" from the command of its messenger to Muhammad, iqra, "recite!"), the revelation of God vouchsafed through the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad in suras (a word originally meaning a course of stones or bricks), or chapters, of a varying number of verses, a total of 114 such chapters making up the entire volume. The townspeople are now, without exception, Muslims, and the everyday import of this faith shall form the basis of the discussion to follow.

With the death of the Prophet, the Islamic world, from that day to this, has been torn by the continual divergence of schools and sects, most of them political in origin, many ephemeral, and a few achieving a dignity of a state religion. Amid the greater divisions of Islam, the people of Rowanduz belong to the party of the Sunna ("custom"), or orthodoxy, of which recognition of the legitimacy of the first four successors of the Prophet is perhaps the best known characteristic. With other Sunnite peoples of northern Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, the Kurds are in sharp doctrinal opposition to the Shi'ah ("party," from Shi'at 'Ali, "the party of 'Ali") of southern Iraq and Iran, a state religion in the latter country from the time of the Safavid Shahs (1501-1736), which insists on the primacy of

and larger confederations of kinship groups are articulated with a similar phraseology. The Kurdish tribe, which has not been extensively discussed, represents in large part such a unit. The lands of the tribe, agricultural or pastoral, are the property of kinship groups, extended patrilineal families, as are the flocks and herds, and an individual cannot alienate them to outsiders without difficulty. Chieftainship is hereditary, commonly with the consentic approval of the men of the tribe. Some chieftains are undistinguished from their tribesmen save in the size of their families' holdings, and others receive a customary share of the annual produce. The Kurdish tribe, then, is traditionally an alliance of extended patrilineal families, sometimes with the fiction of a common ancestor, and membership in the tribe depends on membership in the family, a matter of "blood" descent. Tribal life is directed by the chieftain, and the murder of a member or the theft of property by an outsider is never permitted to go unavenged.

Feudalism, an arrangement different than that of the tribe, requires no redefinition here. It is a personal exchange of duties between landlord and tenant, and is not represented in the Hawraman district by the nomads whose society is exclusively tribal. It seems to have arisen in two ways, in the first of which the chieftains of nomadic groups took agricultural villages under their protection. One might remark again that the nomad, because of his mobility and firepower, has a military advantage over the villager. In the second, some powerful families, by the

gradual increase of their holdings, have reached a position of dominance over their neighbours. In Kurdish feudalism the chieftain "owns" the lands of his tenants and levies a yearly tax. The terminology of feudalism, however, is that of the tribe, and, as has been noticed, a Nestorian Christian tenant may be spoken of as "belonging" to this or that chieftain's tribe and wear its traditional garb. The two systems, the tribal which is primitive in character and the feudal which is based on individual ownership of land but which is also pseudo-primitive, are interwined in the Rowanduz district. There are men who are the landers of tribes, others who are feudal landlords, and those others who are both. The aristocracy is undifferentiated in terms of the tribal or feudal systems, using the same titles, and is based on noble descent. The relationship between the chieftain and the tribesmen or tenant is always in personal terms. Just as in the case of the tribe, the feudal landlord is expected to direct the life of his tenants and to arrange them. The commoners identify their house with that of their chieftains and are glad to give up a share of their produce, for they partake of the prestige of their superiors. Although there is no structural interest, the mixture of tribal and feudal systems in Kurdish Iraq is normally decentralised, segmented into hundreds of groups whose relations with one another are not always amicable. Lastly, with the exception of the Nestorian Christians, the chieftains and commoners belong to the same ethnic unit and are qualitatively undifferentiated

6

548 The migrations and shiftings of the Assyrian (Christian) population consequent upon the various massacres and persecutions that have taken place since the War have had important repercussions on the economics of the area. The Assyrian groups were formerly widely distributed among the Kurdish villages, mostly in a region North West from area A. 1. Despite special pleading by Rignon and others it would appear that, apart from the religious differentiation, there was formerly little ethnic or cultural difference between Assyrian and Kurd. Under present conditions the differentiation is much more marked. Persecution and the patronage of over-sympathetic European Christians has had the double effect that those Assyrians who are now left in the region are on the one hand congregated into tightly-isolated colonies, and on the other are rapidly adopting a high degree of western sophistication with its accompanying technical advantages. One such Assyrian colony exists at Seire, and appears to be achieving considerable prosperity through the scientific development of intensive cultivation. This success is likely to have consequences for neighbouring Kurdish groups.

501 The distinction made in Rowanduz by the existence of the climatic (the comparative fertility) and the looseness of the tribal organization as now existing.

[502] C. Plains area. Geographically this area differs completely from the other two. Largely flat, completely treeless, with a minimal rainfall, and overlaid almost for four or five months of every year, it would seem to be no place for the Kilisanu. Yet the soil is one of the richest in the world. It forms part of the great "fertile crescent" so beloved of archaeological historians, and has yielded a vast annual crop of wheat and barley for literally thousands of years.
571 Historically the area formed part of the great Assyrian and Hittite empires and the number of archaeological remains is sufficient evidence of its economic and political importance in ancient times. Today the
A-2 population consists of two distinct cultural groups; nomadic and semi-
528 settled Arabs intrusive from the South and permanently settled Kurds with distinct Turkish and Armenian groups in the towns. According to
• 176 Hay (p. 77) the penetration of the Kurds southwards into the Erbil plain is a comparatively recent historical event. He holds that the area was formerly occupied by nomadic Arab groups who have been ousted by the recent expansion of the Jirai tribe. The evidence for this
601 view seems to me doubtful. In any case, whatever the historical facts,
189 the techniques and economic arrangements of the plains Kurds now differ so markedly from the hill groups that in most respects they must be treated as a separate culture group. Politically also they differ from the hill Kurds in that the present village chiefs (Aghas) are mostly of quite different lineage to their followers, so that the organization tends to be feudal rather than tribal. I had supposed at first that this was a very recent development but similar conditions are described by Hay writing in 1925.

[See map, cat. title, p. 71 -- Arabic]